

## *Pleurotus tuber-regium*



*Pleurotus tuber regium* © Fran Guard

**Cap:** funnel shaped, 30 – 250 mm diameter. Surface dry, felted in appearance, beige-brown, greyish brown or ochraceous. Cap margin distinctly inrolled.

**Stipe:** cylindrical, sturdy, 30 - 150 × 7 - 35 mm. Densely hairy with a basal matt of white fungal threads (mycelia) connecting stem with a small to large (50 – 250 mm), heavy, underground globular sclerotium, with brown covering and dense, chalky, white internal structure.

**Gills:** decurrent and extending well down onto stem, crowded, narrow, whitish-cream.

**Flesh:** white, firm, chalky.

**Spores:** white, cylindric, 7.5 – 10.5 × 3 – 4.5 µm.

**Basidia:** clavate cylindrical, 25 – 35 × 5 – 6 µm, four spored.

**Cheilocystidia:** cylindrical to clavate, 20 – 45 × 3 – 7 µm, sometimes nodulose.

**Pileipellis:** a trichoderm.

**Habitat:** This fungus appears to grow from soil, but is probably attached to well-rotted underground wood. Mainly associated with *Araucaria* forests and plantations but probably occurs in other subtropical rainforests.

**Notes:** This unusual gilled fungus grows from an underground food storage organ called a sclerotium. The sclerotium is thought to be formed during periods of stress, e.g. drought, and may take years to develop. Fruiting occurs when stress is relieved.

**Collections examined:**